



Home	About Us ▾	Spiritual Things ▾	Feasts/Fasts ▾	RSSRSS ▾	Links ▾	"Redeeming the Time" Blog	Search
Home	About Us ▾	Spiritual Things ▾	Feasts/Fasts ▾	RSS ▾	Links ▾	"Redeeming the Time" Blog	Search

"The Argument Is Not One of Calendars: It Is Conflicting Dogma and Theology That Lead to Separate Celebrations of Pascha"

by Archpriest George Metallinos

The Resurrection of Christ is not only the unshakeable foundation of our Faith ("If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain" ¶ Corinthians 15:17), but also brings to mind the tragic division in the Christian world of our era.

The goal of ecumenical or inter-Christian dialogue is precisely to remove this division and to restore unity.

Indeed, in ecumenical circles, the common celebration of Pascha is considered to be an essential step in this direction.

The decision to change the calendar (1923-1924) — a hasty decision that was not pan-Orthodox — led to the common Christian celebration of Christmas (and the immovable Feasts), but not to that of Pascha (and the movable Feasts), which continues to be determined in the Orthodox world on the basis of the Julian (Old) Calendar.

A recent Patriarchal Encyclical (No. 150/26 May 1995) raises the question of the necessity of "determining" "a common date for the celebration of the Great Feast of Pascha by all Christians," thereby promoting a unionist course.

We should not forget, however, certain fundamental historical and theological constants which decisively determine the meaning of Christian (Church) Feasts and our liturgical experience of them, as in the case of Pascha:

(a) Many Orthodox rightly maintain that the impediment to celebrating Feasts at the same time as the non-Orthodox is not the difference in calendars, but the difference in dogma and theology; that is, our non-convergence on matters of faith, given, in particular, that "faith" in the unbroken Christian Tradition, which is continued in Orthodoxy, is not a simple — either perfunctory or scholastic — acceptance of certain disincarnate "truths" of an absolute nature, but, rather, participation in a way of life handed down by the Apostles and the Fathers, which leads to our experiencing the Holy Spirit.

This experience, when formulated in words, constitutes the Faith of the Church as the Lord's Body. This is how we should understand the Church's canonical injunction — from the First OEcumenical Synod, which, in 325 A.D., resolved the issue of the celebration of Pascha once and for all down to the present day — "not to keep feast with the Jews," which is tantamount, today, "not to keep feast with the heterodox."

This is not a fruit of religious bigotry, but the expression of a healthy and active ecclesiastical self-awareness. For this reason, as far back as 1582, the Orthodox East rejected the "New" Calendar, not for scientific, but for ecclesiological reasons, since the introduction of this calendar was linked both by Westerners and by our own unionists with the imposition of a simultaneous observance of feasts as a (de facto) facilitation of union "from the grass roots" (on a broad basis).

This spirit was embodied in the controversial Encyclical of 1920, which proposed "the acceptance of a single calendar for the simultaneous celebration of the major Christian feasts by all the Churches."

We will not dwell, here, on the fact that this Encyclical places Orthodoxy and non-Orthodoxy on the same level. We will, however, recall that, while certainly paving the way for ecumenism, it nonetheless served to provoke the genesis of the "Old Calendarist" question, which remains a tragic and traumatic experience in the body of the Orthodox Church and ought, for this very reason, to be resolved prior to any partial or broader settlement in the domain of "ecumenical" dialogue.

(b) The precondition for the common "celebration of Christian feasts" is not agreement over the calendar or diplomatic and legal accords, but "the unity of faith and the communion of the Holy Spirit"; namely, adherence to an understanding of Christianity as a "spiritual hospital" (St. John Chrysostomos), that is, as an existential and social hospital and as a method of therapy.

The ideologizing of Christianity or its academic formulation — maladies resulting from ecumenical dialogue — not only do not lead us to the unity we desire, but actually take us away from it. The unity and union which culminate in the Holy Table and the Holy Cup require "unanimity" in faith and in Christian life as a whole; that is, acceptance of the Apostolic Tradition in its totality and incorporation into it.

It is for precisely this reason that worship and the liturgical tradition alone do not constitute a basis of unity, as those engaged in ecumenical dialogue widely, but erroneously, believe. Worship and participation in worship are not efficacious in soteriological terms, outside the aforementioned context of a common ecclesiological tradition. The perennial prayer of the Orthodox believer is for "the restoration and reunion of the erring" to the Body of Christ, the One Church (Liturgy of St. Basil the Great).

In this way, the amphidromic force of the statement of St. Paul, which we cited at the beginning, is justified: "If the Resurrection of Christ is the foundation of our Faith, then authentic Faith is the sole precondition for participation in the Resurrection as the greatest event of our salvation in Christ."

Archpriest George Metallinos is clergyman of the Church of Greece and a professor of the University of Athens. This article was published in the newspaper Kathimerini.

Be the benefactor of an Orthodox temple! We have been in our new temple since June 2010. The cost was much higher than budgeted and our debt burden is very high. Donations to our [building fund](#) will help us pay down the debt so we can afford to build the iconostasis.

Donate



Donate to the Building Fund using PayPal.

You may also send funds to: St Nicholas Orthodox Church
memo "Building Fund"
P.O. Box 37, McKinney TX. 75070

Be the benefactor of an Orthodox temple! We have been in our new temple since June 2010. The cost was much higher than budgeted and our debt burden is very high. Donations to our [building fund](#) will help us pay down the debt so we can afford to build the iconostasis.

Donate



Donate to the Building Fund using PayPal.

You may also send funds to: St Nicholas Orthodox Church
memo "Building Fund"
P.O. Box 37, McKinney TX. 75070

Help our prison minstry! I see 16 men in 2 prisons, 4 times a month. Gasoline costs alone are \$200.00, not to mention postage, toner, printing, books, etc. Because of our parish's recent building project, there is no funding for the prison ministry at this time. Please consider a one time donation, or contact me for a small monthly donation. I would like to be able to stop working in my secular job as an RN, and funding the prison ministry will go a long way towards that goal. God bless you!
[Priest Seraphim](#) Great Lent 2011.

Donate



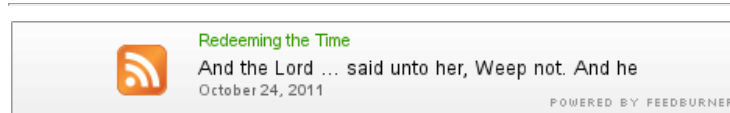
Donate to the Prison ministry using PayPal.

Help our prison minstry! I see 16 men in 2 prisons, 4 times a month. Gasoline costs alone are \$200.00, not to mention postage, toner, printing, books, etc. Because of our parish's recent building project, there is no funding for the prison ministry at this time. Please consider a one time donation, or contact me for a small monthly donation. I would like to be able to stop

working in my secular job as an RN, and funding the prison ministry will go a long way towards that goal. God bless you!
[Priest Seraphim](#) Great Lent 2011.



Donate to the Prison ministry using PayPal.



[↑ Grab this Headline Animator](#)

[Redeeming the Time - new articles](#)

- [And the Lord ... said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still." – The mystical and very practical meaning of these words. 3rd Sunday of Luke](#)

10/24/2011

LISTEN NOW Synopsis: Only the Lord has the authority to tell us to "weep not". There is an epidemic of dysfunctional sadness in the world today; it is being treated by many partial solutions that often increase the despair and emptiness: medications, entertainments, passions. After His command to the...

[Download Podcast](#)

- [That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord." Why do we pray this prayer, when past experience tells us that it will not be fulfilled today?](#)

10/21/2011

LISTEN NOW Synopsis: In the last litany of Vespers and Matins we pray "That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord." Why do we pray this prayer, when past experience tells us that it will not be fulfilled today? Do...

[Download Podcast](#)

- [Electronic Newsletter October 10/23 19th Sunday after Pentecost](#)

10/21/2011

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, McKinney, Texas Electronic Newsletter October 10/23 19th Sunday after Pentecost Optina Elders / Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council Announcements Prayer Requests Schedule of Divine Services in the Coming week Fasting in the Coming week Links related to the coming week Announcements 1....

- [A Spiritual reflection regarding Prayer of an Orthodox Christian priest in front of a late term abortion clinic during the Dallas 40 days for life campaign.](#)

10/21/2011

The Lament of Rachel. LISTEN NOW Synopsis: The personal experience of an Orthodox Christian and priest praying in front of a late term abortion clinic during the 40 days for life campaign, Wednesday, Oct 19, 2011. This is difficult and heavy prayer because outside, on the street, things look...


[Download Podcast](#)

- [The reason for the golden rule: "Ye shall be the children of the highest for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil". Second Sunday of St Luke; Luke 6:31-36](#)

10/17/2011

LISTEN NOW Synopsis: Everybody knows the Golden Rule, but few understand its essence. Many feel it is a command based upon common sense, and others even believe it is a way of changing the behavior of others. The reason for it is given plainly by the words of our...

[Download Podcast](#)

 [Subscribe to this Feed](#)

 [Headlines by FeedBurner](#)

[Redeeming the Time - new articles](#)

- [And the Lord ... said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still." – The mystical and very practical meaning of these words. 3rd Sunday of Luke](#)

10/24/2011

LISTEN NOW Synopsis: Only the Lord has the authority to tell us to "weep not". There is an epidemic of dysfunctional sadness in the world today; it is being treated by many partial solutions that often increase the despair and emptiness: medications, entertainments, passions. After His command to the...

[Download Podcast](#)

- [That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord." Why do we pray this prayer, when past experience tells us that it will not be fulfilled today?](#)

10/21/2011

LISTEN NOW Synopsis: In the last litany of Vespers and Matins we pray "That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord." Why do we pray this prayer, when past experience tells us that it will not be fulfilled today? Do...

[Download Podcast](#)

- [Electronic Newsletter October 10/23 19th Sunday after Pentecost](#)

10/21/2011

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, McKinney, Texas Electronic Newsletter October 10/23 19th Sunday after Pentecost Optina Elders / Fathers of the 7th Ecumenical Council Announcements Prayer Requests Schedule of Divine Services in the Coming week Fasting in the Coming week Links related to the coming week Announcements 1....

- [A Spiritual reflection regarding Prayer of an Orthodox Christian priest in front of a late term abortion clinic during the Dallas 40 days for life campaign.](#)

10/21/2011

The Lament of Rachel. LISTEN NOW Synopsis: The personal experience of an Orthodox Christian and priest praying in front of a late term abortion clinic during the 40 days for life campaign, Wednesday, Oct 19, 2011. This is difficult and heavy prayer because outside, on the street, things look...

[Download Podcast](#)

- [The reason for the golden rule: "Ye shall be the children of the highest for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil". Second Sunday of St Luke; Luke 6:31-36](#)

10/17/2011

LISTEN NOW Synopsis: Everybody knows the Golden Rule, but few understand its essence. Many feel it is a command based upon common sense, and others even believe it is a way of changing the behavior of others. The reason for it is given plainly by the words of our...

[Download Podcast](#)

 [Subscribe to this Feed](#)

 HEADLINES BY
FEEDBURNER

We confidently recommend our web service provider, [Orthodox Internet Services](#): excellent personal customer service, a fast and reliable server, excellent spam filtering, and an easy to use comprehensive control panel.



St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, McKinney (Dallas area) Texas
Phone: (972) 529-2754 Mobile: 972 658-5433 Email: seraphim@orthodox.net
Copyright © www.orthodox.net All Rights Reserved

St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, McKinney (Dallas area) Texas
Phone: (972) 529-2754 Mobile: 972 658-5433 Email: seraphim@orthodox.net
Copyright © www.orthodox.net All Rights Reserved